

April 16, 1969

Mr. Burke Marshall  
Old Orchard Road  
Armonk, N.Y. 10504

Dear Mr. Marshall,

In response to your letter of April 14, I here limit myself to the final paragraph.

What you fail to say is it is what interests me. You do not say the memorandum of transfer concerns only the pictures and X-rays. You do not say by whom it was addressed and to whom. You do not say the "list of items, which appears as Appendix B", is verbatim as in Appendix B. In other words, more or fewer items could be involved. The record is unclear.

With regard to the list in appendix B, that list is utterly meaningless, for it cannot even yield a total number of the various film. It fails to say how many there were of what size and kind, what, if anything, was in an envelope, or whether an envelope had more than a single film in it. It is inconceivable to me that this "list" constitutes the complete record of the film involved for it is virtually no record at all.

None of the information I seek should be secret, nor is the knowledge I seek improperly sought or knowledge to which all the people should not have access. I hope you will agree it is not a family secret. When you add to this the fact that what was conveyed with that memorandum was public property and that no official accounting of even the numbers of the film is in accord with the other official accountings, you have a situation in which responsible writers in the field, if they are to discharge their responsibilities to their calling, must interest themselves. When you add to this the reason given by the Archives for the paper being there and their refusal to give me access to it, how can suspicions be avoided - especially when the oft-promised response was so long and so unnecessarily delayed?

Here again there is a very broad suggestion that officials wanting to hide something are making the family responsible, avoiding federal responsibility for it. The date of that memo exactly coincides with the date on which the government unloaded the embarrassing film. It is not an unwarranted assumption that copies of this memorandum remain in government files, where they are not properly or legally secret.

I renew my request for a complete, unequivocal statement of the content of the memo, if not the document itself.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg